AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

1. (currently amended) A method ~~for facilitating attention to a communication~~ , comprising:

associating a ~~quantity of at least one attention unit~~ total number of attention units to a first entity;

allowing said first entity to provide a first communication to a second entity, wherein said first communication ~~has an associated number of at least one attention unit and at least one associated~~ is associated with a first criterion and a first amount of attention units ; ~~and~~

~~changing a number of attention units associated with at least one of said first entity and said second entity~~ reducing the total number of attention units by the first amount when said first criterion is satisfied ;

allowing said first entity to provide a second communication, wherein said second communication is associated with a second criterion and a second amount of attention units, the second amount being different than the first amount; and

reducing the total number of attention units by the second amount when said second criterion is satisfied, wherein the second entity is to respond to the first communication based at least in part on the first amount of attention units .

2. (currently amended) The method of claim 1, wherein said first communication comprises an email message.

3. (currently amended) The method of claim 2, wherein said first criterion includes at least one of the following:

satisfying a request included in said first communication;

said second entity receiving said email message;

said second entity opening said email message;

said second entity opening an attachment to said email message;

said second entity responding to said email message;

said second entity saving said email message; and

said second entity forwarding said email message.

4. (currently amended) The method of claim 1, wherein said <u>first</u> communication comprises a meeting request.

5. (currently amended) The method of claim 4, wherein said <u>first</u> criterion includes at least one of the following:

satisfying a request included in said <u>first</u> communication;

said second entity receiving said meeting request;

said second entity opening said meeting request;

said second entity responding to said meeting request;

said second entity accepting said meeting request; and

said second entity forwarding said meeting request.

6. (currently amended) The method of claim 1, wherein said <u>first</u> communication comprises a voicemail message.

7. (currently amended) The method of claim 6, wherein <u>first</u> said criterion includes at least one of the following:

satisfying a request included in said <u>first</u> communication;

said second entity receiving said voicemail message;

said second entity playing said voicemail message;

said second entity responding to said voicemail message;

said second entity saving said voicemail message; and

said second entity forwarding said voicemail message.

8. (currently amended) The method of claim 1, wherein said first communication comprises a telephone call.

9. (currently amended) The method of claim 8, wherein said first criterion includes at least one of the following:

satisfying a request included in said first communication;

said second entity receiving said telephone call;

said second entity answering said telephone call; and

said second entity responding to said telephone call.

10. (currently amended) The method of claim 1, further comprising:

confirming completion of said criterion prior to said changing said second entity's attention units preventing the first entity from associating more than the total number of attention units with a communication .

11. (currently amended) The method of claim 1, further comprising:

associating said criterion with said communication wherein the second criterion is different than the first criterion .

12. (currently amended) The method of claim 1, further comprising:

allocating a plurality of attention units among a plurality of entities, said plurality of entities including said first entity and said second entity, wherein each of said entities in said plurality of entities is allocated zero or more attention units , wherein said allocating includes said associating a quantity of at least one attention unit to a said total number of attention units to said first entity .

13. (original) The method of claim 12, further comprising:

allowing an entity from said plurality of entities to acquire additional attention units.

14. (original) The method of claim 12, further comprising:

evaluating an entity from said plurality of entities based, at least in part, on a number of attention units associated with said entity.

15. (original) The method of claim 1, further comprising:

providing a benefit to an entity from said plurality of entities based, at least in part, on a number of attention units associated with said entity.

16. (currently amended) The method of claim 1, further comprising at least one of the following:

establishing a maximum number of attention units can be associated with said first entity;

establishing a maximum number of attention units that can be acquired by said first entity;

establishing a maximum number of attention units that can be loaned by said first entity;

establishing a maximum number of attention units that can be borrowed by said first entity;

establishing a maximum number of attention units that can be sold by said first entity;

establishing a maximum number of attention units that can be purchased by said first entity;

establishing a maximum number of attention units that can be transferred by said first entity;

establishing a maximum number of attention units that can be earned by said first entity;

establishing a maximum number of attention units that can be used by said first entity during a time period;

establishing a maximum number of attention units that can be used by said first entity for said communication;

providing a notification indicative of a maximum number of attention units that can be used with said first communication;

providing a notification indicative of a maximum number of attention units that can be used by said first entity;

establishing a minimum number of attention units can be associated with said first entity;

establishing a minimum number of attention units that can be acquired by said first entity;

establishing a minimum number of attention units that can be loaned by said first entity;

establishing a minimum number of attention units that can be borrowed by said first entity;

establishing a minimum number of attention units that can be sold by said first entity;

establishing a minimum number of attention units that can be purchased by said first entity;

establishing a minimum number of attention units that can be transferred by said first entity;

establishing a minimum number of attention units that can be earned by said first entity;

establishing a minimum number of attention units that can be used by said first entity during a time period;

establishing a minimum number of attention units that can be used by said first entity for said communication;

providing a notification indicative of a minimum number of attention units that can be used with said first communication; and

providing a notification indicative of a minimum number of attention units that can be used by said first entity.

17. (currently amended) The method of claim 1, further comprising at least one of the following

receiving data indicative of said ~~associated number of at least one attention unit~~ total number of attention units ;

receiving a communication from said first entity, wherein said communication includes data indicative of said ~~associated number of at least one attention unit~~ total number of attention units ;

establishing a minimum number of attention units that can be associated with said communication; and

establishing a maximum number of attention units that can be associated with said communication.

18. (currently amended) The method of claim 1, wherein said first criterion is associated with said first communication by default.

19. (currently amended) The method of claim 1, ~~wherein said changing said second entity's attention units includes~~ further comprising:

increasing said second entity's attention units by ~~said number of at least one attention unit~~ the first amount .

20. (canceled)

21. (currently amended) The method of claim 1, further comprising:

establishing an expiration date for at least a portion of said ~~associated number of at least one attention unit~~ total number of attention units .

22. (original) The method of claim 1, further comprising:

maintaining a count of attention receipt units associated with said second entity.

23. (currently amended) The method of claim 1, further comprising:

receiving a notification of a completion of said first criterion.

24. (currently amended) The method of claim 1, further comprising:

receiving a notification of a dispute regarding completion of said first criterion.

25. (original) The method of claim 1, further comprising at least one of the following:

establishing an exchange for the transfer of attention units;

allowing said first entity to run a deficit number of attention units;

allowing said first entity to earn at least one attention unit;

allowing said first entity to purchase at least one attention unit;

allowing said first entity to sell at least one attention unit;

allowing said first entity to borrow at least one attention unit;

allowing said first entity to lend at least one attention unit;

allowing said first entity to transfer at least one attention unit;

allowing said first entity to acquire control of at least one attention unit; and

allowing said first entity to transfer control of at least one attention unit.

26. (currently amended) A method for facilitating attention to a communication, comprising:

associating a ~~first quantity of at least one attention unit to a first entity and a second quantity of zero or more attention units to a second entity~~ first total number of attention points with a first person, wherein an amount of attention points associated with a communication represents an importance of the communication from the perspective of the first person;

arranging for the first person to send a first communication to a receiving person and for the first person to allocate a first amount of the first total number to the first communication;

reducing the first total number by the first amount;

associating a second total number of attention points with a second person;

arranging for the second person to send a second communication to the receiving person, the second communication being sent before the first communication, and for the second person to allocate a second amount of the second total number to the second communication, the second amount being greater than the first amount;

reducing the second total number by the second amount; and

~~changing at least one of said first quantity of attention units or said second quantity of attention units based, at least in part, on said second entity's handling of a communication received by said second entity from said first entity~~

arranging for the receiving party to respond to the second communication before responding to the first communication because the second amount is greater than the first amount.

27. (currently amended) The method of claim 26, ~~wherein said changing at least one of said first quantity of attention units or said second quantity of attention units includes increasing said second quantity of attention units by a number of attention units associated with said communication~~ further comprising:

increasing a third total number of attention points associated with the receiving party when the receiving party responds to the second communication, wherein said increasing is based at least in part on the second amount .

28-29. (canceled)

30. (currently amended) A system for facilitating attention to a communication, comprising:

a memory;

a communication port; and

a processor connected to said memory and said communication port, said processor being operative to:

associate a ~~quantity of at least one attention unit~~ total number of attention units to a first entity;

allow said first entity to provide a first communication to a second entity, wherein said first communication ~~has an associated number of at least one attention unit and at least one associated~~ is associated with a first criterion and a first amount of attention units ; ~~and~~

~~change a number of attention units associated with at least one of said first entity and said second entity~~ reducing the total number of attention units by the first amount when said first criterion is satisfied ;

allow said first entity to provide a second communication, wherein said second communication is associated with a second criterion and a second amount of attention units, the second amount being different than the first amount; and

reduce the total number of attention units by the second amount when said second criterion is satisfied, wherein the second entity is to respond to the first communication based at least in part on the first amount of attention units .

31. (currently amended) A computer program product in a computer readable medium for facilitating attention to a communication, comprising instructions for:

~~first instructions for establishing an amount of at least one attention unit to a first entity;~~

~~second instructions for enabling said first entity to send a communication to a second entity having an associated number of at least one attention unit and an associated criterion; and~~

~~third instructions for altering a number of attention units associated with at least one of said first entity and said second entity said second criterion is satisfied~~

associating a total number of attention units to a first entity;

allowing said first entity to provide a first communication to a second entity, wherein said first communication is associated with a first criterion and a first amount of attention units;

reducing the total number of attention units by the first amount when said first criterion is satisfied;

allowing said first entity to provide a second communication, wherein said second communication is associated with a second criterion and a second amount of attention units, the second amount being different than the first amount; and

reducing the total number of attention units by the second amount when said second criterion is satisfied, wherein the second entity is to respond to the first communication based at least in part on the first amount of attention units.